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The Paramount Position of Srimati Radharani



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RADHA IS PLEASED BY KRISHNA'S RASCAL BEHAVIOUR

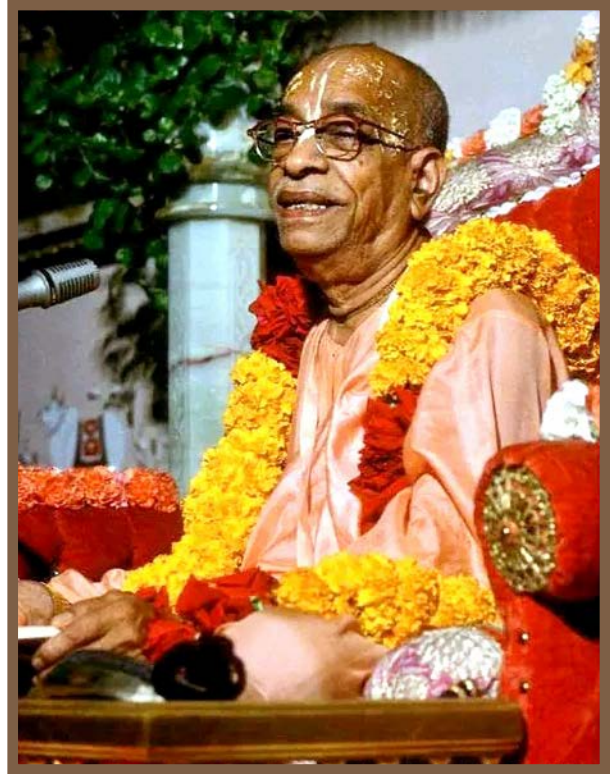


His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Sometimes when Radharani would go out, Krishna would attack her, and when she would fall down — “Krishna, don’t torture me in that way” — they would fall down, and Krishna would take the opportunity and kiss her. [He laughs.] So, Radharani was very pleased, but superficially Krishna was the greatest rascal. So unless rascaldom is in Krishna, how could rascaldom be existent in the world? Our formula of God is that he is the source of everything. Unless rascaldom is in Krishna, how can it be manifest... because he is the source of everything. But his rascaldom is so nice that everyone worships his rascaldom. 🍌

— Perfect Questions Perfect Answers. Chapter 1. Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. 1983. Los Angeles.



Unknown photographer

Cover painting: The *sakhīs* console Radha. Unknown artist. From the first quarter of the 19th century. Influenced by the Nainsukh family.



Symbols on the Lotus Feet of Sri Sri Radha Krishna

MORE PARTIAL TO RADHA THAN KRISHNA



Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

We must cultivate Krishna consciousness under the guidance and order of Krishna's devotee. The daughter of Vrishabhanu is most favorable to Krishna. Another name for Sri Radha is *anukūlyena*, favorable. The spiritual masters are the dearest companions of the daughter of Vrishabhanu. We Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas worship Sri Radha-Krishna. Actually, Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas are more partial to Radha than Krishna. The spiritual master is nondifferent from Sri Radha. Cultivation of Krishna consciousness is done under Sri Radha's guidance and in subordination to her. If we fail to subordinate ourselves to her representative, the spiritual master, we will not be able to cultivate Krishna consciousness or even please Krishna. Rather, we will only dance wildly for our own happiness. By renouncing such adverse mentality, such pride, and by serving Krishna under our guru's order, we will be benefited.

But unfortunately, we have forgotten to satisfy Krishna and are busy satisfying our own senses. Alas! Instead of making Krishna the center of our household we have made ourselves the center and have become attached householders. If we are actually interested in our own benefit, we must take special care during our present life. Otherwise, we will be cheated and will lose an excellent opportunity. 🍌

—Amṛta Vāṇī. 3.10. A collection of statements from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Originally compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Translated into English by Bhumiapati Das. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004.

THE DUST FROM THE FEET OF RADHA



Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Question: Is it possible to become attached to Krishna without being attached to the service of the devotees?

Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur: "How is it possible to immerse oneself in the ocean of *śyāma-rasa* (love for Krishna, the *mādhurya-rasa*) without worshipping the dust of the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani, or without

Unknown artist. Rajasthan. Circa 1795.



Krishna pleads for the mercy of Radharani

taking shelter of Vrindavan, which is decorated with her footprints, or without serving her devotees, whose grave hearts are always absorbed in love for her?” 🍌

— *Bhajana-rahasya* chapter 5, quoted in *Śrī Bhaktivinoda Vāṇī Vaibhava*, 49.5. Compiled by and with questions from Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode. Translated by Bhumiapati Das. Published by Sri Iswara Das and Touchstone Media. Vrindavan. 2002.

KRISHNA'S DEBT TO RADHARANI



Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

When *bhāva* becomes condensed it becomes *mahābhāva*. There are also divisions of *mahābhāva* — *rūḍha-mahābhāva*, *adhīrūḍha-mahābhāva*, *modanākhyā-mahābhāva* and *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva*. That is a very big topic. To further understand this you have to go to that chapter in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*.

It is said that *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva* is the topmost, and *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva-mayī* is Srimati Radharani. She is the personification of *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva*.

That *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva* is her sole property. It is not available with any of the other *gopīs* or with anyone else.

Krishna became indebted to the *gopīs*. When the *gopīs* heard the sweet singing of Krishna's flute they came running to meet him in the dead of night. He said, *na pāraye, na pāraye, na pāraye* — “I cannot pay back, I cannot pay back, I cannot pay back that debt.” The *Bhāgavatam* (10.32.22) describes Krishna's words to them:

*na pāraye 'haṁ niravadya-saṁyujāṁ
sva-sādhū-kṛtyaṁ vibudhāyūṣāpi vaḥ
yā mābhajan durjara-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ
saṁvṛścyā tad vaḥ pratiyātu sādhunā*

“I am not able to repay my debt for your spotless service, even within a lifetime of Brahma. Your connection with me is beyond reproach. You have worshiped me, cutting off all domestic ties, which are difficult to break. Therefore, please let your own glorious deeds be your compensation.”

“O *gopīs*, your love for me is pure love, *viśuddha-prema-maya*. In your love there is no mixture of *jñāna* or *aīśvarya*. There is a Vedic restriction that housewives cannot leave the home. They cannot cross the threshold. But you broke this very strong Vedic etiquette,



Unknown artist. Punjab hills. Mankot school. Circa 1730.

Krishna Massages Srimati Radharani's lotus feet



Krishna and the cowherd boys play Holi with Radharani and the gopīs

this bondage which is very difficult to break — *durjara-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ*. You have broken it for me.”

The *gopīs* are Krishna’s internal potencies, *svakīya-śakti*. But in Vrajabhumi they act like *parakīya*. In English we may say that *svakīya* means wedded and *parakīya* means unwedded. The English language is a nasty language. The *gopīs* are *svarūpa-śakti*, *svakīya*, his own potency, but in Vrajabhumi their *līlā* is *parakīya-līlā*, as if they belong to others. However, they completely belong to Krishna. They are *svakīya* but they act in a *parakīya* way. This is the simultaneous *tattva* there. It is very, very inconceivable. You cannot understand how it is.

This is *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*. [Bg. 18.66] Even Vedic dharma is completely broken. Such are the ways of pure love. Krishna says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja* — “You should abandon all varieties of dharma, even Vedic dharma.” The dharma of the housewife is that she cannot cross the threshold, but at the dead of night you have come here. Family ties are so strong that they cannot be broken, but you have broken them, *durjara-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ*. You have developed such pure love for me that I cannot repay you.

I have become indebted. *vibudhāyusāpi vaḥ* — “Even if I could get a lifespan as long as the demigods or even of Brahma, still I could not pay it back. I have become so indebted. *sva-sādhu-kṛtyaṁ* — Therefore you must kindly be satisfied by your own deeds.”

How to pay back the debt? Krishna says, “The wealth required to pay this debt back is not with me! It is not available in my treasury. Where is it available? It is available with Radharani only. That is *mādanākhyamahābhāva-dhana*, the wealth of *mādanākhyamahābhāva*. Its sole proprietor is Radharani. This wealth is not available anywhere else. What to do? How can I pay it back? I must beg, borrow or steal. If I beg, Radharani will never give it to me. If I want to borrow, she will never allow. So I must steal it.”

Krishna is the supreme stealer, the supreme thief. If you steal, you will be put into jail as a criminal. When Krishna steals it is so very nice, beautiful. Everything is beautiful with Krishna, the supreme thief. Rupapad has written, *kutukī rasa-stomaṁ hṛtvā* [Dvītiya Śrī Caitanyāṣṭaka, text 316], Krishna entered into the storehouse in the core of the heart of Radharani and



Unknown artist. Wall mural from the Bundi Palace in Garh. Photo by Christopher Cappelli

Krishna surrounded by gopis and cows in Vrindavan

stole that *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva*. “*Hṛtvā*” means stole. When Krishna gets that *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva*, that *rādhā-bhāva*, then automatically his mood changes. His complexion changes to molten gold — *tapta-kāñcana-gaurāṅgi*, *tapta-kāñcana-gaurāṅga*. He becomes Gauranga. *Radha-bhāva* predominates in him and he cries like Radharani, feeling the pangs of separation. As Radharani is crying, similarly Gauranga is crying. This is *prema*, *rati*. 🍌

— *Mathura Meets Vrindavan*, chapter 6. From a lecture on Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10.3.31 given in Atlanta, Georgia, 20 June 1994. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar. 2003



From the Ādi Purāṇa, chapter 12

The account given in the Ādi Purāṇa of the names of the family members of Srimati Radharani differs from some other descriptions. It is not unusual for some details to vary in descriptions of the pastimes of the Lord. For example, sometimes Lord Varaha comes in a reddish form and sometimes in a white form. Srila Sanatan Goswami

and other ācāryas call this kalpa-bheda or differences in a particular līlā occurring in different kalpas.

In the 10th verse of the 10th chapter of Ādi Purāṇa, Lord Brahma explains to Narada Muni that when he was born from the lotus navel of the Lord he started to panic and began questioning his own existence. At that time, the paramātmā who resides in everyone’s heart took the form of a bee named Bhṛingadhīp. The Lord in the form of that bee then began to explain to Brahma about a muni named Kiravar who in the form of a bird spoke to him and questioned him about Srimati Radharani.

kīravarā uvāca

*bhṛīṅgādhīpa mahābuddhe rādhikāyāḥ kulam vada
kasya vamśe samutpannā tasyāḥ ko janako 'bhavat*

Kiravar said, “O most intelligent Bhṛingadhīp, what is the dynasty of Sri Radhika? In whose dynasty did she take birth? Who is her father? Please narrate these topics to me. (text 1)

*kā mātā bhrātaraḥ ke vai madhyame tat prakāśaya
tvam hi brahma vidām vijñāḥ svecchā pakshi tanum gataḥ*

“Who is Sri Radhika’s mother? Who are her brothers? Please tell me about these topics. O Bhṛingadhīpa! Even if you have to take a bird form



Srimati Radharani as a baby with her mother

like me and reside among the *brahma-jñānīs* you will be the best of them. (2)

bhṛṅgādīpa uvāca

*dhanyo 'smi tvaṁ mahābuddhe mamānugraha kṛd bhavān
yato 'ti viśadaṁ viṣṇoś caritaṁ prṣṭavānasi*

Bhringadip replied, “O greatly intelligent Kiravara! You are the most fortunate person because you want to know about Lord Vishnu. You have given me this opportunity to explain the topics that you have inquired about. (3)

*āśiṣeṇo mahāgopaḥ purāśīdati pāvanaḥ
arṣṭigrāmo 'sya vasatiḥ sarva sampat samṛddhi yuk*

“In the past, there was a very fortunate and wealthy cowherd whose name was Asishen. He lived in a village named Arshti. (4)

*tasya putro mahābhānuḥ svarbhānuḥ ca tadātmajāḥ
tasyāśīdati puṇyātmā vṛṣabhānuḥ parodayaḥ*

“Asishen had a son named Mahabhanu, Mahabhanu had a son named Svarbhanu, Svarbhanu had a son named Vrishabhanu who performed pious deeds. (5)

*mātāsya mānavī nāmnī pātivrtya parāyaṇā
tasyātmajāstu catvāraḥ sadā kṛṣṇeka cetasā*

“Vrishabhanu’s wife’s name was Manavi. She was also known as Sativrati. She had four sons who had exclusive devotion for Sri Krishna. (6) [Translators note: We worked from two separate Sanskrit editions of *Ādi Purāṇa* for this translation, one in Devanagari script and one in Kannada, both gave the word “*māta*”, mother, in this verse. However, in the context it is clearly incorrect. We are of the opinion that some mistake crept into the manuscripts at some point. For that reason in the translation, we have given “wife”, as again that is clearly the fact in the context.]

*vṛṣabandhur manaḥ saukyaḥ stoka kṛṣṇas tathā paraḥ
srīdāmā ca catur yas tu kanye hi kṛṣṇa vallabhe*



Photo by Gaura Travel.ru

The late sadhu Kirtaniya Baba made over 1,000 paintings of Srimati Radharani's name all over Vrindavan

“The first son’s name was Vrishabandhu, the second son’s name was Manasaukhya, the third son’s name was Stoka Krishna, and the fourth son was named Sridama. Manavi also had two daughters who were always absorbed in thoughts of Krishna. (7)

*rādhikārā matebāle mahābuddhi balodaye
tatrāpi rādhikārās ca datī prāṇa priyā hareḥ*

“The elder daughter’s name was Radhika and the younger’s name was Yamatha. Both possessed all intelligence and power. In particular, Sri Radhika was the *prāṇa-priya*, most beloved, of Sri Hari. (8)


*aṣṭamyām bhādra śuklasya sā jātā ravivāsare
rātrau parāhṇa samaye jyeṣṭhāyās cāntime pade*

“On the *Bhādrapadā-śuklāṣṭamī* (the eighth day of the bright part of the month of August-September), on the day of Sunday, during the auspicious fourth division of the *jyeṣṭhā-nakṣatra*, Sri Radhika was born. (9)

*kim ahaṁ varṇaye bhāgyaṁ rādhāyāḥ paramādbhutam
brahmādayo ’pi na viduḥ paramānanda mandiram*

“O Kiravara! How can I describe the most excellent and wonderful glories of Sri Radhika? Even Brahma and the devas cannot understand her who is the abode of the topmost ecstasy [of love of Krishna]. (10) 🍊

— English translation by Yashoda Pavani from *Ādi Purāṇa* with Hindi translation. Published by Khemraj. 1929.



SERVICE TO MAHAPRABHU BECOMES SERVICE TO RADHA

**Prabhodananda Saraswati Thakur’s
Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta 88**


*yathā yathā gaura-padāravinde
vindeta bhaktiṁ kṛta-puṇya-rāśiḥ
tathā tathotsarpati hṛdy akasmāt
rādhā-padāmbhoja-sudhāṁśu-rāśiḥ*

“To whatever extent a pious person becomes devoted to the lotus feet of Lord Gaura, to that extent the flood of the nectar of Radha’s lotus feet spontaneously arises in his heart.”

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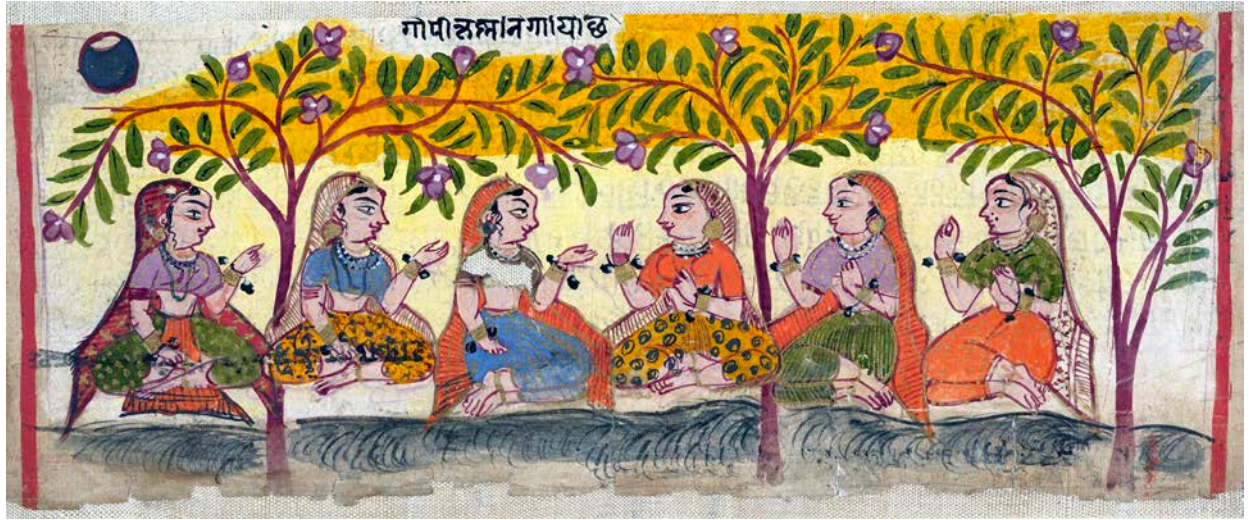
— Prabhodananda Saraswati Thakur. *Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛtam and Śrī Navadvīpa-satakam*. Printed by Ananta Vasudeb Brahmachary. Gaudiya Printing Works. Calcutta. No date. Mayapur. 2000.





Unknown artist. Ashta Nayika Series Circa - 1800-1825

Srimati Radharani braves a storm, poisonous snakes, and a witch on her way to meet Krishna



Unknown artist. Gujarat, Ahmadabad. Circa 1600–1610.

Srimati Radharani's intimate friends speaking with her about Krishna

KANAI KHUNTIA AND THE MAHABHAVA-PRAKASA



Mahābhāva-prakāśa was written in Odia during the time of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu by his Jagannath Puri associate, Kanai Khuntia (or Kānāñi Khuṭiyā — literally, one who opens the door to Kanai Krishna). He was a great devotee of Lord Gauranga, and in the beginning of *Mahābhāva-prakāśa* he says that he heard the matters of this book from Ramananda Raya in the Gambhira. Kanai Khuntia is mentioned twice in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Cc. *madhya* chapter 15, texts 19 and 29) in connection with him dressing up as Nanda Maharaja for a *Janmāṣṭamī* drama. His adaptation of the role of Nanda Maharaja was so charming that in ecstasy, Gauranga Mahaprabhu addressed him as *pitā*, “father.” Kanai Khuntia’s deities of Sri Sri Radha Vrindavan Chandra and the place of his home are still present in Jagannath Puri, just next to the Gambhira in a neighborhood named after him as Khuntia Sahi.

Like the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, we only have one chapter of the *Mahābhāva-prakāśa*. The research scholar and *vaiṣṇava* Fakir Mohan Das first heard of the book while he was residing in Kolkata in 1947. After searching for the book for many years he finally acquired a partial copy from his friend, the scholarly Pandit Sri Krishna Nandan Das, in Cuttack, Odisha. Then, on the 31st of August 1960 he received some other portions of the manuscript from Sri Sadashiva Ratha Sharma, the librarian of Utkal University in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Although the book was incomplete — consisting of only one chapter and even with that section having many missing verses and illegible words, Fakir Mohan Das decided to publish it in Odia language in 1970. 🍊

RADHARANI'S CONNECTION TO THE SUN GOD



Sri Kanai Kunthia's Mahābhāva-prakāśa, texts 142-162

*ekadā se bhānudeva mandara parvate
milile satvare jāi ati gāḍa citte*

(Gauranga said) Once upon a time the sun god alighted on Mandara mountain and entered into a profound and attentive state of mind. (142)

*dinu dina tāpa tārā ati guru helā
devatāmānankar ye teja lopagalā*

Day by day he performed rigorous austerities, so much so that all the other *devas* entirely lost their splendor. (143)

*emanta ye nārāyaṇa prabhu kṛṣṇacandra
praveśa ha-ile surya sammukhe devendra*

Then Narayan Krishna Chandra, who is the Lord of all gods, arrived and appeared directly before the sun. (144)

*abhaya vāñi dei pūcchā eka kale
ki nimante devāṅgahe tapa acarile*

Unknown artist. Mewar, Rajasthan. Circa 1675.



Srimati Radharani secretly appreciating the beauty of Krishna

Krishna consoled the sun god with words and then proceeded to question him as to why he was performing austerities. (145)

*bo-ile he bhānu tumbe jagatara teja
tumbe gopya hele jāta jagata ...*

(The Lord said) “O sun! You are the splendor of this world! If you begin to hide yourself, the world will also lose its luster. [Translators note: The last word of this verse is missing.] (146)

*bo-ile tejamaya prabhu divākar
kathora tapasyā kethi nimante ācara*

“O lustrous bright lord of day! Why are you so preoccupied with this arduous discipline?” (147)

*bo-ile savitā tahañ āhe hṛsikeśa
teja mo ho-ilā guru helā gariyasa*

*mohara teja mote ye bādhaku ānilā
ehā mote asambhāla pari janāhelā*

“O Hrisikesh!” replied the sun, “My radiant beams make me greater than everyone else. It has become apparent to me that my brilliance creates obstacles by making my presence unbearable. (148-49)

*he mahata bhānu tumbe avatāra hela
teje na harila prabhu garu mote kala*

“O Lord who are the greatest of all suns! When you have descended as avatāras you have never, O Lord, plundered me of my excessive dazzling rays. (150)

*mohara teja na hari...(missing)...
sarva jāni kāhiñ pūṇa jijñāsuca gūrū*

[Translators note: Due to a few words missing from the end of the first line I have not tried to translate verse 151.]

*mo teja kara haraṇa prabhu tejomaya
ananta avaya aṭa jagatara thaya*

“Take away my brilliance, O endless and imperishable Lord who is full of splendor, and thus the world may know relief.” (152)

*emāna suni parama kṛṣṇa te ṣa hele
(.....second line missing.....)*

Having heard him speak, peerless Krishna... (missing) (153)

*avatāra ho-i mote tejamāna dia
(.....second line missing....)*

tohara tejamāna ye mora kṛīḍāranti
ho-iba mun tāhā saṅge kariṇa pīratī

(Krishna said) “When I advent, entrust your shiny glare to me...(missing)...your effulgence shall play host to my dalliances and I shall know of love in the company of your bold light. (154 55)

se tohara kanyā boli jagata raṭība
mohara bhāvinī boli sakala jāṇība
tuhi gokula nagare avatāra hebu
tejamayī kanyā mote samarpaṇa debu

“Let it be known to everyone in this world that your effulgence will appear as your own daughter and that she is destined to be my dearly beloved. Appear in the town of Gokula and offer your luminous daughter to me.” (156 57)

emāna kahiṇa prabhu antardhāna hele
bhānuteja vruṣabhānu nāme jāta hele

Having said this, the Lord disappeared and the bright sun was born bearing the name of Vrishabhānu. (158)

tāhāra gharāṇī aṭe kīrtidā ramaṇī
kīrtidā a-urasare teja janmi pūṇī

His wife was an exquisite beauty named Kīrtidā and it was from her womb that “the radiance” appeared. (159)

vibhakta ho-ile boli dhā nāma dharile
teja rākāra nāmāre rādhā nāma hele

If we separate the name of Radha, then the syllable, “dha” denotes support, whilst “rā” implies effulgence, and thus we have the name of Radha. (160)

tejamayī rādhā mora surya tejuṇ jāta
rādhā nāme jagatare ho-ileka khyāta
sehi dinu kṣṇarādhā kṛīḍā ye hoilā
rādhā kṣṇa nāma ehi jagata plāvilā

Thereafter my lustrous Radha was born from the sun and has gained renown in this world by the name of Radha. From that day forth Krishna and Radha’s dalliances commenced, and the world also began to flood with the names of Radha and Krishna. (161-62) 🍊

— Translated by Jagannath Mishra Das, from the edition edited by Fakir Mohan Das. Published by Sri Bhaktivinode Library. Baripada, Odisha, 1965.



THE PARAMOUNT POSITION OF SRIMATI RADHARANI

*Srila Dhyana-chandra Goswami’s,
Gaura-govindārcana Smaraṇa-paddhati
text 189-191*

vinā rādhā-prasādena kṣṇa-prāptir na jāyate
tataḥ śrī-rādhikā-kṣṇau smaraṇīyau susaṁyutau

Without pleasing Sri Radha, it is impossible to obtain Sri Krishna. Therefore, we should always remember Radha and Krishna together.

prema-bhaktau yadi śraddhā mat-prasādaṁ yadicchasi
tadā nārada bhāvena rādhāyārādhako bhava

In the *Bhaviṣyottara-purāṇa*, Sri Krishna says, “O Narada, if you have strong faith in *prema-bhakti* and you truly want to satisfy me and obtain my mercy, then you please become a loving devotee of Sri Radha.

satyaṁ satyaṁ punaḥ satyaṁ satyam eva punaḥ punaḥ
vinā rādhā-prasādena mat-prasādo na vidyate

Similarly, in the *Nārādīya Purāṇa*, Sri Krishna says, “O Narada, I solemnly declare to you again and again and again that without the mercy of Sri Radha, my mercy does not arise.”

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Unknown artist. Chamba Museum, Himachal Pradesh. Circa 1810



The divine couple Sri Sri Radha Krishna



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WHY IS KRISHNA CALLED ATMARAMA?

Second chapter of the Bhāgavata Mahātmya
of the Skanda Purāṇa

śrī-kālindī uvāca

ātmārāmasya kṛṣṇasya dhruvam ātmāsti rādhikā
tasyā dāsyā-prabhāveṇa viraho 'smān na saṁspṛśet

Sri Kalindi said, “For sure Sri Radhika is the very self of Atmaram, self-satisfied Krishna. It is on the strength of being situated in her service that the pain of separation does not affect us. (11)

ātmā tu rādhikā tasya tayaiva ramaṇād asau
ātmārāmatayā prājñaiḥ procyate gūḍha-vedibhiḥ

Radhika is his own self. Wise sages who know the confidential essence of the Vedas call him “Atmaram” because he takes his pleasure in her company. (22)

— Skanda Purāṇa, Vaiṣṇava-khaṇḍa, Bhāgavata-mahātmya. English translation by Gopiparanadhana Das. Unpublished.



Painted by Sajnu at Mandi. 1808

Srimati Radharani and her pet bird